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UNICEF FOLLOW-UP TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY

The present report identifies priority areas for UNICEF in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in September 1994, and discusses how UNICEF will be involved in their implementation.

UNICEF follow-up to ICPD will focus on strengthening its own strategies, advocacy and programme interventions to promote the reproductive health of women and youth, specifically, by improving their access to essential and emergency obstetric care, promoting family planning and preventing sexually transmitted diseases, including human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome. UNICEF also will expand its efforts to provide universal access to basic education, improve gender equity and enhance the status of girls and women in society. These efforts will be carried out in close collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund and other organizations actively engaged in these issues.

The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve the draft recommendation contained in paragraph 21.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The present report discusses UNICEF follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in cairo in September 1994. It reflects the "Report of the International Conference on Population and Development" (A/CONF.171/13) and builds upon policy papers submitted to the Executive Board on safe motherhood (E/ICEF/1990/L.13), family planning (E/ICEF/1993/L.5), the prevention of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) (E/ICEF/1992/L.11) and gender equality and empowerment of women and girls (E/ICEF/1994/L.5), as well as upon the 1992 report on collaboration between UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (E/ICEF/1992/L.13).

2. UNICEF will contribute to ICPD follow-up by reinforcing, through its advocacy and activities, the central message of the Conference, which is the need to achieve population and development objectives through human-focused development, particularly through providing for primary health care (PHC), basic education and the empowerment of women, and addressing family planning in the broader context of reproductive health. Accordingly, UNICEF will continue to strengthen its strategies, advocacy and programme interventions in these key areas. More specifically, the organization will strengthen its efforts to improve access to essential and emergency obstetric care, promote family planning and prevent sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS, among women and youth. UNICEF also will seek to expand its advocacy and activities related to gender equity and the empowerment of women. UNICEF will continue to strengthen its collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNFPA and other United Nations agencies in developing policies, strategies and technical guidelines in these areas.

I. UNICEF INVOLVEMENT IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

3. UNICEF played an active role in the preparations for ICPD and at the Conference itself. Its contribution to ICPD included the year-long secondment of a senior UNICEF adviser to the Conference secretariat and the funding of one staff person. UNICEF-sponsored participants as well as UNICEF staff provided technical input to regional and global preparatory meetings. UNICEF worked with key non-governmental organization (NGO) caucuses on women and youth and with government delegations, providing them with information on issues related to child survival, maternal mortality and adolescent health. In Cairo, UNICEF was represented at the governmental meetings and the NGO Forum by a high-level delegation led by the Executive Director. Advocacy focused on the inclusion of specific, time-bound goals in the ICPD Programme of Action; specific language on children, adolescents and women; and the issue of resources, specifically, advocating the 20/20 initiative promoted at that time by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNFPA and UNICEF, and subsequently joined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and WHO. UNICEF was particularly supportive of NGO involvement in the Conference, working closely with key women's and youth organizations.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT TO UNICEF

4. The ICPD process and Programme of Action are of great importance to UNICEF work on behalf of children, youth and women. It has reinforced the view long held by UNICEF that sustainable development and economic growth require the promotion of basic education for all, health interventions for child survival, the empowerment of women, and family planning and maternal health services. The Programme of Action specifically reaffirms commitments made at the World Summit for Children and the principles contained in the Convention on the Rights of the

Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The Programme of Action also builds upon agreements reached at the International Conference on Primary Health Care in Alma Ata and the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien. This renewed commitment to goals for children and women as a critical element of sustainable population growth increases the opportunities for broad-based partnerships to achieve these goals.

5. The Conference recognized the need to view and address family planning in the broader context of reproductive health, which calls for an integrated approach, including family planning, safe motherhood and the prevention and management of STDs. The Programme of Action also places emphasis on protecting and promoting adolescents' access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, with a particular focus on preventing early and unplanned pregnancy.

6. The ICPD Programme of Action acknowledges that there can be no sustainable human development without the full participation of women in all aspects of development. The Conference advanced consensus on the need to promote gender equality and equity in order to achieve reproductive health for all people as well as to achieve sustainable population growth. Agreements made at the Conference affirm women's rights to health and development as basic human rights and call for an end to violence against women. Consistent with the UNICEF life-cycle approach to gender equity, the report of the Conference emphasizes the elimination of discrimination against girls as a necessary precondition to women's equity, empowerment and health. It highlights the importance of girls' education, health and nutrition needs, the elimination of practices harmful to the health of girls and women, and the impact of early child-bearing on the health and status of young women.

III. UNICEF FOLLOW-UP TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A. Areas of emphasis in UNICEF advocacy and programme support

7. The holistic view of population and development endorsed by ICPD is in harmony with the long-standing UNICEF view that child survival and development and the empowerment of women have a positive and often decisive impact on lowering fertility rates, promoting a small family norm and contributing to sustainable development. UNICEF promotes that view through programmes in the fields of child health and nutrition, basic education, water supply and sanitation and empowerment of women. Given the consensus on the central role of those efforts for achieving sustainable population growth rates, follow-up to ICPD opens up additional opportunities for strengthened collaboration with United Nations agencies, bilateral development organizations and NGOs. As a follow-up to ICPD, UNICEF will continue to foster the establishment of effective partnerships that work towards the achievement of international and national goals to reduce infant, child and maternal mortality.

8. Based on policy decisions of the Executive Board over the past five years, UNICEF has been developing its strategies and programming interventions in sexual and reproductive health, principally in the areas of safe motherhood, family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention. Following ICPD, UNICEF will continue to strengthen its approaches in those areas, further developing its strategies on women's health and youth health. UNICEF efforts will build on previous work and reflect the goals and strategies agreed to at both the World Summit for Children and ICPD, particularly the goal of reducing the maternal mortality rate by one half between 1990 and the year 2000, and the World Summit for Children supporting goals of access for all couples to family planning information and services and access for all pregnant women to essential and emergency obstetric care. Particular attention will be placed on incorporating information on the sexual and reproductive health situation of women and youth, including the

status of existing services and promotional efforts, into the situation analysis and country programme process.

9. UNICEF will enhance its support to the provision of essential and emergency obstetric care, including prenatal care, post-natal services and the promotion of overall maternal health and nutrition, as described in its policy paper on safe motherhood (E/ICEF/1990/L.13). Efforts also will continue to ensure that women have access to skilled birth attendants, whether they be nurses, midwives or doctors, who can conduct safe deliveries and determine when referral is necessary. Particular emphasis will be placed on recognizing the signs of danger during pregnancy and delivery, strengthening referral for the management of obstetric complications and ensuring that emergency obstetric care is available and accessible to women in need. Programming interventions will focus on the organization of sustainable services for emergency obstetric care at the district level, adequate transportation and community involvement.

10. Contacts with pregnant women and mothers during prenatal and post-natal consultations and child immunization sessions will be used as opportunities to increase awareness among women and the broader community on maternal health issues. This will include counselling on breast-feeding and access to appropriate information and services on family planning in the late post-partum period. UNICEF will continue to encourage services which are oriented and sensitive to women's needs. Community and district monitoring of maternal deaths also will be emphasized, particularly through participatory methods which involve both the health sector and community-based NGOs. Work will continue with Governments and other partners to encourage the collection of gender- and age-disaggregated data on reproductive health issues, including the incidence of STDs and HIV/AIDS and maternal mortality and morbidity.

11. The 1993 UNICEF policy paper on family planning (E/ICEF/1993/L.5) describes its support to family planning information and services and related activities in education, communications and enhancing the status of women, in collaboration with other agencies. UNICEF will continue its advocacy for the responsible planning of family size, including birth spacing and the importance of child-bearing at an appropriate age. Programme support will continue to be directed towards the integration of family planning into PHC, health education activities and training of health workers. Increased emphasis will be placed on linking family planning to other reproductive health interventions and women's health issues, and making services more accessible to women, especially vulnerable populations. In consultation with UNFPA and WHO, technical guidelines will be developed for field offices on UNICEF programming in reproductive health, including family planning. UNICEF cooperation in family planning will be coordinated with that of WHO, UNFPA and others, in accordance with the particular mandate of each agency.

12. In recent years, UNICEF has placed increased emphasis on the prevention and management of HIV/AIDS and other STDs through a multisectoral approach. UNICEF advocacy and programme interventions address both the impact of the epidemic on children and families and the prevention of HIV/AIDS among youth and women. UNICEF advocacy and programming for HIV/AIDS prevention has been broad-based, emphasizing school-based interventions, family and community care, mass communication and youth health and development. While its principal focus is on children, youth and women, UNICEF efforts also will encourage a more responsible role for men in maintaining sexual and reproductive health. UNICEF has been an active participant in the development of the new United Nations joint and co-sponsored programme on HIV/AIDS and will work as part of the new programme.

13. UNICEF work in the area of youth addresses several interrelated health and development issues, including the prevention of early and unplanned pregnancies, STDs, substance abuse and violence, including cultural practices harmful to the health of girls and young women. UNICEF will continue its advocacy and programming in adolescent sexual and reproductive health, with a particular

focus on promoting a supportive policy environment, ensuring that services are "youth-friendly", empowering girls and young women in decision-making and working with the mass media to promote dialogue and debate on this and other sensitive issues. UNICEF remains committed to ending the harmful practice of female genital mutilation and has issued an executive directive (CF/EXD/1994-009) to its field offices encouraging them to work at the country level to strengthen partnerships with national and local NGOs working on this issue and to develop regional strategies towards its elimination of the practice.

14. Beyond the health sector, UNICEF will give added importance to supporting a wide range of programme activities for the advancement of women and girls, as outlined in the policy review on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls (E/ICEF/1994/L.5). Pursuing a life-cycle approach to gender and development has led UNICEF to strengthen its focus on the particular needs of young girls, adolescent girls and adult women. Specific emphasis will be placed on activities which target women in poverty and women and girls in especially difficult circumstances, including emergency situations. UNICEF will encourage the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data; advocate for gender-sensitive national laws, policies and programmes; support the provision of opportunities for women to participate in community, local and national processes; and help to build alliances between Governments and women's NGOs.

15. A significant UNICEF contribution to the follow-up of ICPD will be increased priority to support for basic education, with particular emphasis on equitable access by girls, and a major effort to reduce illiteracy, especially among women.

16. ICPD emphasized the need to mobilize adequate financial support for the implementation of its Programme of Action. The Conference specifically took note of the initiative to mobilize resources to give all people access to basic social services known as the 20/20 initiative. UNICEF will continue to advocate support for the 20/20 initiative, currently supported by UNDP, UNFPA, WHO, UNESCO and others.

B. Coordination with partners

17. UNICEF will work closely with UNFPA, WHO, the World Bank, UNDP, bilateral development organizations and other governmental and non-governmental partners in developing and strengthening its own strategies and programming guidelines in reproductive health. This will involve close coordination with UNFPA and WHO and technical consultations to ensure complementarity of efforts. UNICEF will continue to participate actively in the Inter-agency Working Group on Safe Motherhood, the Joint Programme on Maternal Death and Disability and the Inter-agency Working Group on Female Genital Mutilation. UNICEF, together with UNFPA, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, WHO and other relevant organizations, will collaborate closely on developing strategies and appropriate programme approaches to address the reproductive health needs of women and adolescents in emergency settings.

18. A strong partnership with WHO, specifically its Division of Family Health, will continue in the area of sexual and reproductive health. The two organizations are working closely to advance efforts in the area of safe motherhood, to integrate reproductive health into PHC and to establish technical definitions for female genital mutilation and its health complications. WHO and UNICEF will continue to conduct joint missions to countries to provide support for the development and strengthening of essential obstetric care, family planning and the prevention and management of STD interventions.

19. At the global level, UNICEF will continue its working partnership with UNFPA, particularly in the areas of women's and adolescent's reproductive health and in efforts to improve the status of women. UNICEF will participate actively

in the Inter-agency Task Force on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and other consultative processes which evaluate progress made. At the country level, where appropriate, UNICEF will participate in the UNFPA programme review and strategy development exercises and invite UNFPA to participate in UNICEF mid-term reviews and country programming strategy meetings as part of an overall effort to enhance field-level partnership in the areas of adolescent and women's reproductive health.

20. At global, regional and country levels, UNICEF will strengthen its advocacy in the areas of women's and youth health, particularly their sexual and reproductive health. UNICEF will seek to enhance awareness of the linkages between population growth, education, child survival, women's empowerment and reproductive health. UNICEF will work in close partnership with women's and youth organizations, with a particular focus on facilitating partnership between the health sector and NGOs at national and community levels. Globally, UNICEF also will seek to strengthen its partnerships with international NGOs and technical organizations active in women's health. As part of this process, UNICEF is engaged actively in all preparatory activities for the Fourth World Conference on Women. Significant emphasis will be placed on helping to ensure that the progress made in Cairo on the issues of women's health and empowerment is reflected and built upon in Beijing.

IV. DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

21. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve the following draft recommendation for UNICEF follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development:

The Executive Board,

Reaffirming its decision 1993/11 on UNICEF involvement in family planning (E/ICEF/1993/14),

Reaffirming further that UNICEF follow-up to ICPD should be consistent with policies in, inter alia, the documents on safe motherhood (E/ICEF/1990/L.13), prevention of HIV/AIDS (E/ICEF/1992/L.11) and family planning (E/ICEF/1993/L.5), the 1992 report on collaboration between UNICEF and UNFPA (E/ICEF/1992/L.13), the medium-term plan (E/ICEF/1992/3) and the document on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls (E/ICEF/1994/L.5),

1. Endorses the framework for follow-up to ICPD presented in the report on UNICEF follow-up to ICPD (E/ICEF/1995/12);

2. Encourages UNICEF to continue:

(a) To develop and strengthen its strategies, advocacy and operational programming in the areas of health education, water supply and sanitation and other cross-cutting themes to be supportive of the principles and priorities laid down in the ICPD Programme of Action;

(b) To place emphasis on developing and strengthening advocacy and programming to promote the reproductive health of women and youth, specifically, their access to essential and emergency obstetric care, family planning information and services and prevention and management of STDs, including HIV/AIDS;

(c) To strengthen its partnerships, coordination and collaboration with WHO, UNFPA, other United Nations agencies and NGOs which are actively supporting ICPD follow-up in accordance with their respective mandates.